

FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

RELEASE NO: 64-221

8/30/1964

NASA STATEMENT ON APPROPRIATION BILL

The following is a statement by James E. Webb, Administrator, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, in response to queries on the effect of the Independent Offices Appropriation Act which included funds for NASA and was signed by President Johnson on August 30, 1964.

The appropriation for FY65 of \$5.250 billion for NASA is further Congressional recognition of the vital importance to this nation and the free world of the increased aeronautical and space efforts which have gone forward under three administrations. This program can give this nation preeminence in space and continue its aeronautical superiority.

The Congress understands this. Its support has been bipartisan every year since it was started.

This appropriation comes six years after NASA was established and at the midpoint of the 10-year, \$35-billion program which was adopted in 1961 to challenge the then clearly dangerous Russian lead in space. NASA will utilize these funds to maintain the basic momentum and direction of the program as presented to Congress but will make a number of adjustments to meet the Congressional reduction of \$195 million, to effect those specific changes directed by Congress,

and to take advantage of experience gained from operations conducted during the nine months since the budget was submitted.

Although these adjustments will affect launch schedules and program milestones, Dr. Dryden, Dr. Seamans, and I are convinced that it is best to make a maximum effort to gain operational leadership in manned space flight and that the manned lunar landing should continue to be targeted within this decade. This will stretch NASA and its contractors to the limit, but we have advised the President that we are not at this time willing to give up this goal which is so challenging and which is so important as a focus for the efforts we must continue to make in all our programs. In this decision we are taking the most effective steps we can to make sure we are not again set back by some new breakthrough such as Sputnik or Vostok arising from the continued very active space program of the Russians.

In space, the obstacles are great and the lead times long. Time lost cannot be made up. The target date is only five years away. Our assurance that it can be met is less than under President Johnson's budget, but we still hope that with hard work, dedication, continued successes, and continued support we can meet it. We are going to make a hard try.

This decision does not involve the transfer to manned space flight of funds from space science and applications programs or

advanced research and technology programs. These programs will require some adjustments, but will not be drastically reduced as would be necessary if funds were reprogrammed to benefit manned space flight.

In the program for unmanned planetary exploration, the combination of a heavy workload at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, the short lead time available, and the importance of applying our resources to a major advance beyond the limited Mariner make it unwise to undertake a Mars mission in 1966 with the current Mariner-type spacecraft. The development of a spacecraft with much greater scientific promise for launch to Mars in 1969 is being initiated.

In close association with the aeronautical and space committees of Congress, all programs will be kept under constant review to take advantage of every development and every means to maintain the momentum and progress toward preeminence in space.